

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 12-13, 15-35 and 37-43 are present in this application. Claims 12, 29 and 37 are independent. Claims 29-35 have been canceled.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 12, 13, 15-28 and 37-43 are allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application.

The remaining claims (claims 29-35), have been canceled, thereby automatically placing this Application into condition for allowance. Allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 29 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ackermann et al. (Ackermann), claims 30 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Ackermann in view of Church, claim 32 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Ackermann in view of Jeske and claims 33

and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Ackermann in view of Erdman. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 29-35 have been canceled, thereby rendering their rejections moot.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Percy L. Square, Registration No. 51,034, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Application No.: 10/041,613
Art Unit 2834

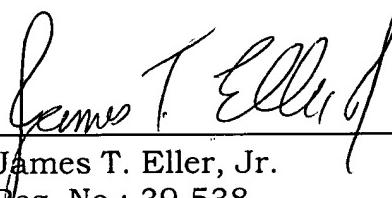
Attorney Docket No. 0630-1403P
Amendment filed May 18, 2004

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By:



James T. Eller, Jr.
Reg. No.: 39,538

JTE:PLS:jls

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P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
Telephone: (703) 205-8000